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CATHOLIC—THE NAME AND THE THING.

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THERE is probably no word that is more misused in modern times than "Catholic." It is a name used to conjure with, and it stands for things which excite the passions of men to an extraordinary degree. It is, indeed, one of the great words of Christianity, ripe with historic meaning, and pregnant with all-important consequences. It is important, therefore, that we should know what the name really means, and what things are actually embraced under it. There is only one pathway to this knowledge. We must, so far as practicable, divest ourselves of every form of provincial, sectarian, and partisan prejudice, and trace the word in the lines of historic investigation from its origin until it gained a stereotyped meaning.

The word "Catholic" had its origin in the Greek language; and the things it stands for in Christianity originated at a time when the Greek language was the religious language of Christians in the West as well as in the East, in Rome and Africa and Gaul, as well as in Alexandria, Asia, and Antioch. The word is not found in the Greek Bible of the Old Testament, or the New Testament. It is an adjective compounded of the preposition *κατά*, meaning in this connection "throughout," and the adjective *ὅλος*, "whole," properly in the accusative, *ὅλον* or *ὅλην*, in

accordance with the noun to which it is attached. These words are used separately often enough in the Greek Bible and in Greek literature, but, as compounded into an adjective, though quite frequently in Greek literature in the sense of "universal," not until the sub-apostolic age in Christian literature. We first meet the word in the epistle of Ignatius, the bishop of Antioch, to the church at Smyrna, early in the second century, in the sentence: "Wheresoever the bishop shall appear, there let the people be, even as where Jesus may be, there is the catholic church" (8). The catholic church is the church gathered about Jesus as its head, just as the church of Smyrna was gathered about its bishop. The catholic church is thus the universal church as distinguished from the local church, the church throughout the whole world, under Jesus Christ the bishop of all; as Ignatius says, in this same epistle: "that he might set up an ensign unto all ages, through his resurrection for his saints and faithful people, whether among Jews or among gentiles, in one body of his church" (1); using *σῶμα*, the favorite term of Paul. We find three uses of the word in the letter of the church of Smyrna on the martyrdom of Polycarp, its bishop, soon after the martyrdom in 155 or 156. There is no good reason to question their genuineness. The letter is addressed "to all the sojourning churches of the holy catholic church throughout every place" (1). The martyr, when arrested, offers prayer for "the whole catholic church throughout the habitable world" (8). Jesus Christ is represented as "the Shepherd of the catholic church throughout the habitable world" (19). It is evident, therefore, that in the church of Smyrna under its bishop Polycarp, and the church of Antioch, under its bishop Ignatius, the term "catholic church" had become a name for the universal Christian church as united to Christ the universal Shepherd, Bishop, and Lord. The name "catholic," like the names "church" and "apostle" and "Christian," seems to have originated in Antioch.

Although the term does not appear in Hermas, the Roman prophet of this period, yet the conception does. For he uses the image of a tower for the church as built up of living stones

in four courses or generations, of apostles and prophets and ministers,¹ just as Paul uses the image of a temple;² and he conceives of the church as the bride of Christ,³ just as Paul does.⁴ Hermas frequently uses the term “*holy church*” for the whole body of Christianity united to Christ, in this following Peter who represents the Christian body as “a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.”⁵ Justin, who represents, in his origin Palestine, and in his chief Christian service Rome, does not use the term “catholic,” but represents the unity of Christians as the true Israel of God in accordance with Paul⁶ and in fulfilment of the prophecies of the Old Testament. The *Muratorian Fragment*, representing the Roman church of the latter half of the second century, uses the term “catholic church” twice, as synonymous with “one church spread abroad through the whole world.” Irenæus, bishop of Lyons, who represents Asia in origin, but Gaul in his ministry, writing in the last quarter of the second century, says that “the catholic church possesses one and the same faith throughout the whole world.”⁷ We may say, therefore, that the word “catholic” had become a common name for the church throughout the world by the close of the second century.

The Christian church of the second century was not only in conflict with Judaism and heathenism, and so passed through a number of persecutions with its martyrdoms; it also had to wage a still more difficult war against Gnosticism in its manifold forms. It therefore became necessary to battle for genuine Christianity, against the many spurious forms proposed by the Gnostics to make an eclectic religion by mingling Christianity and heathenism; and Christian writers were obliged to appeal for authority to the traditions of the apostolic sees and to the apostolic writings. The catholic church, therefore, insisted upon its historic unity with the apostles, as well as upon its geographical unity throughout the world, and its mystic or vital unity with the enthroned and reigning Christ. Irenæus is the most

¹ Sim. 9:15.

³ Vis. 4:2.

⁵ 1 Peter 2:5.

² Eph. 2:19-22.

⁴ Eph. 5:23-26.

⁶ Gal. 6:16.

⁷ *Adv. Haer.*, I, 10:3.

reliable exponent of this situation. He speaks of the "rule of the truth which he received by means of baptism."⁸ "The church, though dispersed throughout the whole world, even to the ends of the earth, has received from the apostles and their disciples this faith," which he defines in terms similar to the Apostles' Creed.⁹

The church having received this preaching and this faith, although scattered throughout the whole world, yet as if occupying but one house, carefully preserves it. She also believes these points just as if she had but one soul, and one and the same heart; and she proclaims them, and teaches them, and hands them down with perfect harmony, as if she possessed only one mouth. For although the languages of the world are dissimilar, yet the import of the tradition is one and the same.¹⁰

Irenæus says: "When we refer the heretics to that tradition which originates from the apostles, which is preserved by means of the successions of presbyters in the churches," they object to tradition, saying that "they themselves are wiser not merely than the presbyters, but even than the apostles, because they have discovered the unadulterated truth."¹¹

And so the three great adjectives qualifying the church gradually originated "*holy*," "*catholic*," and "*apostolic*." Writers differ in their use of these terms. They were often used interchangeably as standing for essentially the same things. The adjective used in connection with the article of the church, in the so-called Apostles' Creed, varies in the ancient writers. The original form of the Roman symbol was probably "*holy church*," the word of St. Peter and Hermas, which was subsequently enlarged to "*holy catholic church*" not later than the early years of the fourth century.

The name "*catholic*" thus stood for three essential things: (1) the vital unity of the church in Christ; (2) the geographical unity of the church extending throughout the world; (3) the historical unity of the church in apostolic tradition. These things only gradually emerged from concrete forms of common experience into abstract forms of definition, due partly to the external forces of controversy, partly to internal forces of evolution.

⁸ *Ibid.*, I, 9:4; *cf.* 22:1.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 10:1.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 10:2.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, III, 2:2.

It is undoubtedly true, as Irenæus and other ancient Fathers have stated, that there was in Christianity a sacred deposit, committed in oral instruction by the apostles to the churches which they established, and which did not find complete expression in apostolic writings. Moreover, the church was inhabited by the divine Spirit, the great teacher, counsel, and guide, in accordance with the promises of Jesus and the experience as well as the teachings of the apostles. This deposit was used by the church under the guidance of the divine Spirit, when it was needed in the unfolding of its knowledge and of its life. It soon became necessary, after the death of the apostles and of their immediate successors, to collect in definite form some of the essential things of this deposit. We cannot take time to trace the gradual evolution of these things in the different apostolic sees; but it was certainly the work of the second Christian century to give us the consensus of the church, in a canon of Holy Scripture, a creed known as the Apostles' Creed, and the organization of the church in its order, discipline, and worship.

Several important questions now emerge :

1. If the catholic church maintains its unity with the apostles by historic succession, ought we not to limit the scope of catholicity to those things that can be proved, from apostolic writings, to be the teaching of the apostles? In this case the New Testament would be the test of catholicity, and not the writings of the Fathers of the second Christian century. If the teaching of the apostles is to be limited to that recorded in the writings of the New Testament, then we must either limit ourselves to the express teaching of the New Testament, or recognize at the same time legitimate logical deductions and practical applications. This latter principle has been so universally recognized that it is hardly worth our while to argue for it. If this be so, then the church of the second century in its logical unfolding and practical application of the teaching of the New Testament gave the church what may be called the catholic type, as distinguished from the New Testament type.

But we must go farther than this, and say that it is difficult to suppose that the entire teaching of the apostles is actually

recorded in the New Testament. The teaching of one apostle, Paul, dominates the New Testament. Where shall we find the teaching of the Twelve, commissioned by our Lord to make disciples of all nations and teach them his commands, unless we find it in the traditions of the churches which they established? It is recognized by many modern historians that the Christian church of the second century did not follow Paul in his distinctive teachings; but was more in accord with such teachings of Jesus as we find in the synoptic gospels, and with what we know of the mind of the Twelve only by incidental references in the New Testament. Arguing back from effect to cause, there must have been other extended and more powerful influences than those of Paul, leading even the Roman church in somewhat different lines from those Paul marked out. How can this be explained unless we suppose that Peter and other authoritative teachers gave instruction which did not find its way into writings, but was written in the minds of their hearers and inscribed upon the institutions of the church?

When Harnack says that "only one gentile Christian, Marcion, understood Paul" (in the second century), "and he misunderstood him;"¹² what is that but to imply that Paul's theology as understood by Harnack had not the same preponderating influence in the church that it has in the New Testament? But inasmuch as the epistles of Paul were gathered into the canon before the catholic epistles, and especially in the Roman church, may it not also imply that the church of the second century did not understand those epistles as some modern Germans do; and may they not after all have been correct?

The old Protestant view that the church of the second century declined from the apostolic faith, as expressed in the New Testament, is historically impossible and incredible. Such an unfaithful and declining church could never have sustained the stress of martyrdom and have overcome the seductions of Gnosticism, and then have come out of the martyrdoms of the second and third centuries into the victories of the fourth century. It is not valid historical criticism which justifies the

¹² *Dogmengeschichte*, Vol. I (1886), p. 62.

interpretation of the evolution of catholic Christianity as a secularization of Christianity. It is not true that Greek philosophy and Roman administration secularized Christianity.

Clement of Alexandria was more just in his estimation of the facts when he said :

Perchance, philosophy was given to the Greeks directly and primarily till the Lord should call the Greeks. For this was a schoolmaster to bring the Hellenic mind, as the Law the Hebrew, to Christ. Philosophy, therefore, was a preparation paving the way for him who is perfected in Christ.¹³

The same may be said of the Roman administration. Philosophy was prepared by divine Providence to give Christianity its philosophic form for doctrine, and the Roman administration was prepared in the same way to give Christianity its administrative organization. To regard all this as secularization, and as a victory of vanquished heathenism over Christianity, is to misinterpret Christian history. It is the effort to interpret ancient Christianity after a modern theory which is contrary to the principles of the philosophy of history and any just conception of historical evolution. It is not strange that this theory results in making the history of dogma end in bankruptcy.

It is necessary to say that New Testament Christianity is one thing, catholic Christianity is another, later, and in some respects more complete thing, however far short it may fall of the ideals of Christ and his apostles in other respects.

2. The next question that emerges is whether we are to limit catholic Christianity to the consensus of Christianity as recorded in the writings of the second Christian century. We have already seen that we cannot limit the teaching of the apostles to that teaching as recorded in the New Testament. So we cannot limit the teaching of the catholic church to that which has been transmitted to us in those writings of the second century which have been preserved; for as many of the prophets and apostles of the first century were not so much writers as teachers, preachers, and organizers of churches, just so in the second century many of the great bishops and teachers have left us no literary monuments, and many of the writings of other influential teach-

¹³ *Strom.*, I, 5.

ers and writers have been lost. We have, therefore, only a very partial and incomplete literary expression of the faith and life of the church when it realized, emphasized, and gave expression in historic forms to its catholicity. The church of the third and fourth centuries cannot be explained merely on the basis of the literature of the second century. Furthermore, the divine Spirit was working mightily in the church and guiding the church in all its parts to use its sacred deposit by logical deduction and practical application to new needs and circumstances as they arose. Especially in the field of the practical application of Christianity literary records often fail us when most needed. It is necessary to supplement to some extent, therefore, the literature of this century, if we would comprehend all that the catholic church stood for at the close of that century. But how far shall we go in this regard and where shall we stop?

It is necessary to include the third Christian century with the second in thinking of the ancient catholic church, for there is no evident line of cleavage between them. The processes of the second century did not reach their conclusion until the third century. The external struggles of Christian Rome with imperial Rome still continued, and the blood of the martyrs continued to attest the reality of the catholic faith and life. The integrity of apostolic Christianity had still to be maintained against various eccentricities and corruptions. The internal evolution of the church under the guidance of the divine Spirit went on, and treasures new as well as old were brought forth from its sacred deposits. The canon had been defined as to its first and second layers; but there was still uncertainty as to the apocrypha, the catholic epistles, and the Revelation, and other early Christian writings. There was a consensus as to the Apostles' Creed in the essentials of its primitive Roman form, but its clauses had not altogether reached their final form. But especially in the life and institutions of the church the writers of the third century give us important help to determine even the consensus of the second century. There can be no doubt that the church has always been influenced by external more than by internal forces in the formulas it has constructed at successive stages in

its history. It is, therefore, those features of Christianity that are more external which are most emphasized before the world. Those features which are more internal and esoteric are in the background of documents and writings, and in not a few instances are outside the scope of their discussion. In this case the silence of documents may be the best evidence of catholic consensus on such matters as were already established beyond controversy. It is necessary, therefore, if we would understand catholicity in its entire scope, to ascertain the consensus of the Christianity of the second and third centuries as to Christian life and Christian institutions as well as to Christian doctrine. It is especially necessary to do this because with the fourth century the great doctrinal discussions came into the field which were determined by the great ecumenical councils, fixing the orthodoxy of the church, and as a result of this situation the faith of the church became the most prominent thing; and that cast its shadow over the previous centuries also, giving an exaggerated importance to the preparatory evolution of doctrine in those centuries in the statements of subsequent writers.

3. Standing on the basis of these councils, the Greek church has ever named itself the Orthodox church. The question now arises: Are we entitled to use these definitions of orthodoxy as belonging to catholic Christianity? May we say that these are simply definitions of that which the church really believed in the previous centuries, and that they are only a necessary evolution of the sacred deposit of apostolic and catholic teaching? A careful study of this question makes it evident that, as we distinguish catholic Christianity as a second stage to New Testament Christianity, so we must distinguish orthodox Christianity as a third stage in the order of evolution of Christianity. We have no more right to put the definitions of the great ecumenical councils back into the catholic church of the previous centuries than we have to put the definitions of the catholic church of the second and third centuries back into the New Testament times.

It may, however, be urged that, while this may be true of all the later councils, it cannot be true of the council of Nice, for we must regard that council as giving expression, at the begin-

ning of the fourth century, to the consensus of the Church of the previous century. But we cannot take that position in fact, for the Nicene council did not define the consensus of Christianity. It made one opinion orthodox and dominant over against a widely prevailing Arianism and semi-Arianism. If, moreover, we recognize that the first council may define the catholic faith by limiting orthodoxy to one of several views hitherto prevailing, and may so divide the Christian church into sections, of which only one can be called catholic, there is no valid reason why we should stop with that council, or indeed with any council, for it establishes the principle that to be and remain catholic one must accept as final the decisions of the catholic church on any question, in any and every age until the end of the world. And this is quite easy so soon as the principle is recognized. For we have to bear in mind that the catholic church has always claimed in such decisions that it is not really making any new doctrines, but simply defining apostolic Christian doctrine over against errors which have sprung up in contravention to it. If these later definitions of catholic doctrine are to be regarded as really catholic, then as an inevitable consequence catholic and orthodox—Catholic and Roman—become practically convertible terms.

Moreover, we cannot limit catholicity to dogma, as many vainly suppose. We cannot think ourselves catholic simply because we agree with the Greeks in holding to the definitions of the great ecumenical councils. Catholic, as we have seen, covers not only the faith of the church, but also, indeed primarily, its institutions and its life. If, indeed, we recognize that there has been a sacred deposit transmitted by tradition in the church other than Holy Scripture, it is necessary from the very nature of the case to find that more largely in religious institutions and ethical life than in doctrine. If catholicity is to be extended to the evolution of doctrine, it must also be extended to the evolution of institution, and thus the whole system of mediæval rites and ceremonies, the sacramental system, and papal organization come inevitably into the range of catholicity as necessary to constitute a truly catholic church.

We see all about us men on various steps leading to this goal. Those who insist upon the Nicene Creed as the test may be conceived as on the first step, although many of them are inconsistent enough in that they are not willing to rise to the position of the men of Nicæa as to sacrament and ecclesiastical organization. Many wish to go so far as to comprehend the dogmatic decisions of all the ecumenical councils, although they shrink from the religious life and institutions that developed in parallel lines with these dogmas. Still others there are who under the name of catholic would introduce Augustinianism in whole or in part. Still others would insist upon all the chief dogmas and institutions characteristic of the Western church before the Reformation, and undo all the work of reform except the single item of separation from the jurisdiction of Rome. But it is difficult to see how anyone who has gone so far should not take the final step. For it were mere wantonness to separate from the jurisdiction of Rome and break the geographical unity of the church for no other motive than ecclesiastical independence. The Reformers were compelled to this separation by great differences of dogma and institution, where, they at least thought, they followed the authority of Holy Scripture and conscience in its convictions, at great cost to themselves. It is mere perversity not to return to Rome if the conscience is convinced that Rome is right in all her great controversies with Protestantism.

It is evident from what has been said that there is not only a confusion in men's minds, through the different interpretations that they give to the name "catholic" and the things they comprehend under it; but there is, indeed, real difficulty in fixing the limits of catholicity by historical criticism. The dust of centuries, the cinders of a multitude of controversies, cover it over. It is not such an easy problem as many imagine.

At this point it is necessary to consider the question discussed so thoroughly by Harnack as to the relation of the terms "catholic" and "Roman." There can be no doubt that at the close of the third Christian century "Roman" and "catholic" were so closely allied that they were practically identical. What

was it historically that attached the terms "Roman" and "catholic" so closely together in the second and third centuries? Harnack has given a very able and thorough study of this question, which in all essential particulars must be recognized as historically correct. As he states, all the distinctive elements of catholicity found their first expression in the Roman church.¹⁴

1. The Apostles' Creed is essentially a Roman symbol. Professor McGiffert thinks he has shown that it was constructed as a protection against the errors of Marcion. This is a new theory favored by the fact that such controversies have been the historic origin of most, if not all, creeds and confessions of faith. But other scholars, notably Harnack, Kattenbusch, Schaff, and Sanday, think it was an evolution, due to the need of a baptismal formula, both for the instruction of catechumens, and as a statement of their faith as a prerequisite to baptism. I cannot agree with my colleague in this matter. He recognizes that the creed is based on a trinitarian formula of baptism. Doubtless that is true, but on the basis of that formula creeds were constructed in various parts of the Christian church, due doubtless in part to the controversies with Gnosticism, but also in part to the need of common formulas of instruction—and these gradually were conformed to the Roman symbol.

2. It was in Rome that the canon of Holy Scripture first began to be fixed; and the Roman canon gradually became the norm for the entire church.

3. The list of bishops with the doctrine of apostolic succession appears historically first in the Roman church.

4. The Roman constitution became the norm even for oriental churches.

5. There can be no doubt that to the Roman church of the second century was assigned in some sense the primacy in the Christian church. This was due to the fact that it was in the capital of the Roman empire, that Christians from all parts of the world resorted thither; and it became in this way cosmopolitan, the most truly representative of all churches, the whole

¹⁴*Dogmengeschichte*, Vol. I, pp. 362-71.

church, as it were, in miniature. Rome was the center of the struggle of Christianity against imperial Rome—the chief seat of martyrdom. It had the unique advantage of having the two chief apostles, Peter and Paul, if not as its founders, at least as its chief teachers, sealing their testimony with their blood. It was also in Rome that the chief victories were won over Gnosticism, over Marcion, and later over the Montanists and the Donatists. To Rome all parties appealed for her opinion in matters of controversy. Rome thus became the citadel of genuine Christianity. It was at Rome that the Christian institutions received their richest and strongest development, and the Christian life had the largest scope for its activity in all the various manifestations of holy love, and the severest tests of its reality and power. This primacy, we may say, was universally acknowledged, although, especially in the third century, when the Roman bishops strained their primacy so as to dictate to other sees, their dictation was on several occasions resented and resisted. Before the close of the first century, Clement writes in the name of the Roman church a letter to the church of Corinth and sends representatives to heal its divisions, just as Paul had sent Titus on an earlier occasion. Ignatius in his epistle to Rome recognizes the Roman church as *προκαθημένη*, having the presidency, especially in love. The aged Polycarp does not shrink from a long journey to Rome in order to perfect communion with its bishop. As Harnack says, Anicetus did not go to Polycarp, but Polycarp to him. Irenæus says :

Since, however, it would be very tedious, in such a volume as this, to reckon up the successions of all the churches, we do put to confusion all those who, in whatever manner, whether by an evil self-pleasing, by vainglory, or by blindness or perverse opinion, assemble in unauthorized meetings; (we do this, I say) by indicating that tradition derived from the apostles, of the very great, the very ancient, and universally known church founded and organized at Rome by the two most glorious apostles, Peter and Paul; as also (by pointing out) the faith preached to men, which comes down to our time by means of the successions of the bishops. For it is a matter of necessity that every church should agree with this church, on account of its pre-eminent authority, that is, the faithful everywhere, inasmuch as the apostolical tradition has been preserved continuously by those (faithful men) who exist everywhere.¹⁵

¹⁵ *Adv. Haer.*, III, 3:2.

To go farther would be to needlessly heap up witnesses. As Harnack says :

The proposition, "*ecclesia Romana semper habuit primatum*," and the other, that catholic virtually means Roman Catholic, are gross fictions when devised in honor of the temporary occupant of the Roman see, and detached from the significance of the Eternal City in secular history ; but applied to the church of the imperial capital they contain a truth the denial of which is equivalent to renouncing the attempt to explain the process by which the church was unified and catholicized.¹⁶

There can be no doubt that the Roman Catholic church of our day is the heir by unbroken descent to the Roman catholic church of the second century, and that it is justified in using the name "catholic" as the name of the church, as well as the name "Roman." But this does not by any means imply that all that is Roman, or has been Roman since the third century, may be included under the term "catholic." Nor does it determine whether other Christian churches may in our day rightly claim to be catholic. That depends upon the decision we may give to other questions we must now consider.

We must now return to the church of the second and third centuries—the ante-Nicene church. There can be no doubt that the church at that time was catholic and that it was possessed of all the elements of catholicity. As we have seen these were: (1) A consciousness of geographical unity in one church spread throughout the world. (2) A historical unity by succession with the apostles. This involves that nothing shall be regarded as catholic that cannot be derived as a normal development of the apostolic church. (3) A vital or mystic unity with Christ. This involves that Christian life and worship, as instituted by the historic Christ and maintained by union with the reigning Christ, shall be conserved as making the church truly holy.

We have seen that catholic Christianity expressed its unity in the canon of Holy Scripture and in the old Roman Creed, both of which were regarded as apostolic. If holding these be the test of catholicity all organized Christian churches are catholic —Lutheran and Reformed, Congregational, Methodist, and

¹⁶ Vol. I, p. 371.

Baptist—as well as Anglican, Greek, Oriental, and Roman. But it is evident that these documents give only a partial expression of catholic Christianity. The writers of the second Christian century exhibited a consensus with the apostolic church and also with the church throughout the world in other things no less essential to Catholicity than Holy Scripture and Creed.

The most essential thing in catholic unity is unity in Christ. This, in the consensus of the ante-Nicene church, consists in two things—the ethical unity of love and the religious unity in the holy eucharist. Both of these appear in the letter of Pliny to Trajan at the opening of the first Christian century. Both appear in the Teaching of the Apostles at about the same time. Christian love, in its Christ-like form of self-sacrificing love to the brethren, enemies, and persecutors, is the first thing in the way of Life, of the two ways which begin this document. In the second part, the holy eucharist is the pure sacrifice, the spiritual food and drink of the church to be partaken of only by those baptized into the name of the Lord.

1. Let us look a little more closely at the catholic *ethical principle*. There is nothing in which catholic consensus is so distinct as in this. Justin and the other apologists make it the characteristic thing in the Christian life. Hermas brings out distinctly Christian love as a council of perfection. He puts it in the form of a parable where the servant not only keeps all the commands of his master, but does a good work besides to the vineyard. This is then interpreted as follows:

Keep the commandments of the Lord, and thou shalt be well-pleasing to God, and shalt be enrolled among the number of them that keep his commandments. But if thou do any good thing outside the commandments of God, thou shalt win for thyself more exceeding glory and shalt be more glorious in the sight of God than thou wouldest otherwise have been.¹⁷

Ignatius, in his epistle to the Ephesians, says that:

Love is the way that leadeth up to God. (9.) Let us be zealous to be imitators of the Lord, vying with each other who shall suffer the greater wrong, who shall be defrauded, who shall be set at naught. (10.)

Irenaeus, after referring to the tradition of doctrine and

¹⁷ *Sim.* 5:3.

ancient constitution of the church and the succession of the bishops, mentions in his climax

the pre-eminent gift of love, which is more precious than knowledge, more glorious than prophecy, and which excels all other gifts (iv. 8),

with an evident use of 1 Cor., chap. 13, and he makes this love characteristic of the Catholic church as distinguished from all heretics (IV, 7, 9).

Indeed, this ethical principle of holy love alone enables us to explain the organic unity of the catholic church and the primacy of Rome. Ignatius sees in the Roman church "the presidency of love." Clement, writing as the head of the Roman church of Corinth, uses no other authority than that of love:

Let him that hath love in Christ fulfil the commandments of Christ. Who can declare the bond of the love of God? Who is sufficient to tell the majesty of its beauty? The height, whereunto love exalteth, is unspeakable. Love joineth us unto God; love covereth a multitude of sins; love endureth all things, is long-suffering in all things. There is nothing coarse, nothing arrogant in love. Love hath no divisions, love maketh no seditions, love doeth all things in concord. In love were all the elect of God made perfect; without love nothing is well-pleasing to God; in love the Master took us unto himself; for the love which he had toward us, Jesus Christ our Lord hath given his blood for us by the will of God, and his flesh for our flesh, and his life for our lives.

Ye see, dearly beloved, how great and marvelous a thing is love, and there is no declaring its perfection. Who is sufficient to be found therein save those to whom God shall vouchsafe it? Let us therefore entreat and ask of his mercy that we may be found blameless in love, standing apart from the factiousness of men (49, 50).

Dionysius of Corinth at a later date, writing to Soter, the bishop of Rome, says:

From the beginning it has been your practice to do good to all the brethren in various ways, and to send contributions to many churches in every city; thus relieving the want of the needy and making provision for the brethren in the mines, by the gifts which you have sent from the beginning. You Romans keep up the hereditary customs of the Romans, which your blessed bishop Soter has not only maintained, but also added to, furnishing an abundance of supplies to the saints and encouraging the brethren from abroad with blessed words as a loving father his children.¹⁸

Hippolytus, bishop of Portus and Roman martyr, compares

¹⁸ EUSEBIUS, *Church History*, IV, 23:10.

the church to a ship tossed in the great deep of the world, whose skilled pilot is Christ, and the ropes that bind her together are the love of Christ.¹⁹ The unity of the church is in holy love which binds Christians to him and to one another. The primacy of Rome was recognized because she was the champion of Christianity in holy love. The church of Smyrna says :

The martyrs, as disciples and imitators of the Lord, we cherish as they deserve for their matchless affection toward their own King and Teacher. May it be our lot also to be found partakers and fellow-disciples with them. (17.)

Rome was the martyr church above all others. In her the two chief apostles, Peter and Paul, suffered with a great multitude from all lands in the dreadful blood-bath of Nero, which is the undertone of the book of Revelation. In her Ignatius of Antioch, Clement, Hippolytus, Justin, and a host of Christian heroes suffered and died for the faith. In her St. Cecilia, St. Agnes, and a multitude of matrons and virgins offered up themselves in loving sacrifice to Christ. The Roman church has its foundations in martyrs' blood, and this more than anything else makes her pre-eminent and perpetuates her pre-eminence. In Rome one feels close to the martyrs, in touch with original Christianity. If only the Roman church had maintained her pre-eminence in love, no one would ever have denied her primacy. If she had been content to follow the master as the servant of all the churches, she would have easily ruled them all. But when she began to substitute legal constitutions and physical force for the moral influence of love, she erred from the fundamental catholic principle. But what other church can cast the stone at her for this fault? It is a common fault of them all. If only Rome would renew her first love, the reunion of the catholic church would be assured.

2. The holy eucharist was the *religious principle* of union with Christ. There can be no doubt that the consensus of the ante-Nicene church was that it was an eating of the flesh of Christ and the drinking of his blood as a sacrifice. It is most common to regard it, as in the *Teaching of the Apostles*, as a fulfilment of

¹⁹ *Christ and Antichrist*, 59.

the prediction of the pure sacrifice of the prophet Malachi (Mal. 1:11). Thus Ignatius early in the century says:

I desire the bread of God which is the flesh of Christ, who was of the seed of David, and for a draught I desire his blood, which is love incorruptible.²⁰

Be ye careful to observe one eucharist, for there is one flesh of our Lord Jesus Christ and one cup into union with his blood; there is one altar, as there is one bishop, together with the presbytery and the ~~deacons~~, my fellow-servants, that whatsoever ye do, ye may do it after God.²¹

Justin says:

For not as common bread or as common drink do we receive these; but in like manner as Jesus Christ our Savior, having been made flesh by the word of God, had both flesh and blood for our salvation, so likewise have we been taught that the food which is blessed by the prayer of his word, and from which our blood and flesh by transmutation are nourished, is the flesh and blood of that Jesus who was made flesh.²²

And

So he then [that is, Malachi] speaks of those gentiles, namely us, who in every place offer sacrifice to him; *i. e.*, the bread of the eucharist and also the cup of the eucharist.²³

Irenæus says:

He [that is, Jesus] has acknowledged the cup (which is a part of the creation) as his own blood, from which he bedews our blood; and the bread (also a part of the creation) he has established as his own body from which he gives increase to our bodies.²⁴

The consensus of the ante-Nicene church is that the eucharist is a thank-offering, after the teaching of Paul. But about this consensus gathered in the course of time a cloud of theories which has obscured the original meaning of this essential institution of the Christian religion. Having lost sight of the ancient distinction between different kinds of sacrifices, when the Augustinian doctrine of sin became dominant in the church, the conception of the sacrifice as a sin-offering to a great extent took the place of the primitive conception that it was a eucharistic or thank-offering. This later view of it is rejected in the Articles of Religion in the clause:

²⁰ *Romans*, 7. ²² *Apol.*, I, 66.

²¹ *Phil.*, 4. ²³ *Trypho.*, 41. ²⁴ *Adv. Haer.*, V, 2:2.

Wherefore the sacrifices of Masses, in the which it was commonly said that the priest did offer Christ for the quick and the dead to have remission of pain or guilt, are blasphemous fables and dangerous deceits.

But unfortunately they did not substitute therefor the ancient catholic conception of sacrifice. In this respect the liturgy of the holy communion of the Church of England is more catholic, although the language may be interpreted in such a spiritualizing sense as to empty the sacrifice of its catholic meaning. It is to be feared that the English Reformers actually had that intention, and that the Anglican ordinal was not intended by those who framed it to ordain priests to celebrate sacrifice, although the Anglican archbishops in their response to Leo XIII. seem to interpret it as intending real priesthood and real sacrifice. The participation in the holy communion as a sacrificial feast was the consensus of the ante-Nicene church. This has also been overlaid with theories as to the mode of the presence of the flesh and blood of Christ, which do not belong to the catholic faith. It is one of the most important movements of our times that there has been a return to the original catholic conception, not only in the Anglican church, but in the Roman church, and in many Protestant theologians. Here again is a thread which may soon become a rope to bind the church in catholic unity.

I have taken considerable time to unfold these more vital principles of catholic unity, because they are usually ignored in the discussions of the subject, in the interest of the more external marks of dogma and ecclesiastical organization. In fact, as Dr. Allen has shown in his *Christian Institutions*, the development of the historical episcopate was due to the needs of a proper celebration of the holy eucharist, as may be seen in the epistles of Ignatius, as well as to the needs of ecclesiastical government and discipline. It was in the ancient catholic church, as in the church of all ages, that vital principles determine the formal principles, although later the vital principles are too often cramped by the forms of their own creation.

Although the Church of Rome in its dogmatic teaching has overlaid the catholic conception of the holy eucharist with the

dogma of transubstantiation, and pressed the eucharist behind the sin-offering, yet that cannot be said of the ceremony of the mass, which is free in its language and ceremonies from both of these conceptions. No one can deny that the Roman church, the Greek church, and all the oriental churches are catholic in this particular. But what of the Protestant bodies? Is the Church of England catholic in this respect? Do its standards represent the catholic experience in the celebration of the holy eucharist? The "Articles of Religion" cannot be so explained; "The Book of Common Prayer" may be; but it is at least doubtful whether that was the intention of its original authors. It was, however, the intent of the Elizabethan Reformers to make it possible for Catholic and Protestant to use the "Common Prayer" alike. This may be shown from the history of the times. The best that can be said of other Protestant churches is that they are not anti-catholic in this particular, and that there is a tendency among them to return to the primitive catholic conception.

We shall now resume the more formal tests and apply them also. Geographical unity has been lost by the Protestant churches—by the Church of England more than any other; for the Church of England is so strictly a national church that she is confined to the Anglo-Saxon race. She not only has no communion with the Roman Catholic church, but she also has no communion with the sister national churches. In this respect she is farther off from catholicity than the Lutheran church, which is represented in many lands, and which even in the United States is a stronger body numerically than the Protestant Episcopal church. The Church of England is still farther off from catholicity in this respect than the Reformed or Presbyterian family of churches, which is the most widespread and most numerous of all Protestant bodies, and which has always recognized the Anglican and Lutheran bodies as her sisters, and has always been ready to commune with them. The Reformed or Presbyterian churches have always made more of catholicity in its geographical form than the Church of England. One looks in vain in the "Articles of Religion" for any conception of a catholic

church. But in the Westminster Confession it is very prominent.

The catholic or universal church which is invisible, consists of the whole number of the elect that have been, are, or shall be gathered into one, under Christ, the head thereof, and is the spouse, the body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all. The visible church, which is also catholic, or universal under the gospel (not confined to one nation as before under the Law), consists of all those throughout the world that profess the true religion together with their children, and is the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ, the house and family of God, out of which there is ordinarily no possibility of salvation.

The Westminster divines conceived of an ecumenical council of Reformed churches. Their chief purpose was to reform the Church of England in accordance with the teachings of Holy Scripture and the example of the best Reformed churches of the continent, and to enter into closer union and fellowship with them. But the Church of England held aloof, content to be simply a national church.

The Church of England asserts her catholicity by maintaining apostolical succession through the threefold ministry. For this she has struggled as if she realized that her very existence depended upon it. But is she in this respect so very much superior to other sister-churches of the Reformation? It may be doubted. For many of them likewise claim apostolical succession for their ministry—they also have the three orders—bishops, elders, and deacons; only their orders are orders of the congregation and not of the diocese; and they claim that, though this succession for many centuries ran through a line of presbyters and not diocesan bishops, these presbyters were the only catholic bishops, the bishops of the first and second centuries being parochial and not diocesan. So far as a reconciliation with Rome is concerned, since the decision of Leo XIII., the Church of England has no advantage whatever over the Reformed churches in this matter of apostolic succession. Any advantage she may have is limited to her own estimation of herself. Newman tells us how he was caught in the Anglican *Via Media*:

The Anglican disputant took his stand upon antiquity or apostolicity, the Roman upon catholicity. The Anglican said to the Roman: "There is but

one faith, the ancient, and you have not kept it." The Roman retorted: "There is but one church, the Catholic, and you are out of it." The Anglican urged: "Your special beliefs, practices, modes of action are nowhere in antiquity." The Roman objected: "You do not communicate with any one church besides your own and its offshoots, and you have discarded principles, doctrines, sacraments, and usages, which are and ever have been received in the East and the West."

Newman continues:

The true church as defined in the creeds was both catholic and apostolic; now, as I viewed the controversy in which I was engaged, England and Rome had divided these notes or prerogatives between them; the cause lay thus, Apostolicity *versus* Catholicity.²⁴

He tells us how it was the words of St. Augustine—*Securus judicat orbis terrarum*—quoted by Wiseman in an article in the *Dublin Review*, August, 1839, that opened his eyes to see that the deliberate judgment, in which the whole church at length rests and acquiesces, is an infallible prescription and final sentence against such portions of it as protest and secede (p. 117).

Wiseman in that article said:

St. Augustine has a golden sentence on that subject, which should be an axiom in theology.

He quotes it in Latin from *Contra Epistolam Parmeniani*, III, 4, and translates it as follows:

Therefore the entire world judges with security that they are not good who separate themselves from the entire world, in whatever part of the world (p. 154).

This sentence made Newman a Roman Catholic. He saw clearly, what multitudes have seen since, that you cannot build catholicity on apostolicity alone; and that, where these are brought into conflict, catholicity in the narrower sense of universality is sure to win.

It has been too often overlooked by Anglicans that "catholic" comprehends much more than apostolicity. It also includes holiness or purity. It was the exaggeration of that attribute that induced the ancient Donatists to separate from the church, and that influenced also the English Separatists, too often confounded with Puritans and Presbyterians. It was the emphasis

²⁴ *Apologia*, chap. iii, new edition, 1892, p. 106.

upon pure doctrine, pure discipline, and pure life, as more important than unity, that really influenced to a great extent the whole Protestant movement, and specially those bodies which have separated from the Protestant national churches.

As we have seen, the attributes *holy*, *apostolic*, and *catholic* are so involved that they ought not to be separated—the three blend in true catholic unity, the three are all involved in the saying of Vincent of Lirens: “*quod ubique, quod semper, quod ab omnibus creditum est.*” This is often misunderstood by taking it out of its context. Vincent himself defines *ubique* as universality, *semper* as antiquity, and *ab omnibus* as consensus—and the consensus as not the consensus of all Christians, but as sacerdotal and magisterial consensus in the church.²⁵

The three are indeed combined in this sentence:

We must collate and consult and interrogate the opinions of the ancients, of those, namely, who, though living in divers times and places, yet continuing in the communion and faith of the one catholic church, stand forth acknowledged and approved authorities.²⁶

Each one of these terms qualifies the other, and no one can be regarded as sufficient apart by itself. Doubtless the church should be *holy* as united to Christ in all its parts, that is the most essential thing; it should also be *apostolic*, that is next in importance; but it must also be *catholic* in the narrower sense of universality, in order to be catholic in the larger sense of *catholic unity*, blending the three attributes.

It depends altogether on what tests you apply, whether an individual or a church can be considered catholic or not. If we would be catholic we cannot become catholic, by merely calling ourselves by that name. Unless the name corresponds with the thing, it is a sham, and it is a shame. Many earnest Christians, not only Anglicans, but men of every name and denomination of Christians, are under the influence of a catholic reaction and are sincerely desirous of being truly catholic, and especially of regaining the catholic unity of the church. When we have regained the thing, then we may with propriety call ourselves by the name.

²⁵ *Commonitorium*, 2.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 3.

A great step forward in the catholic direction was taken when the Quadrilateral of Unity was adopted jointly by the Protestant Episcopal church and the Church of England. It is not a perfect statement. It is easy to criticise it. It does not in all respects correspond with catholicity. It exceeds it in some respects, it falls short in others. But it is the best platform of catholic unity which has thus far been proposed. The truest catholicity is brotherly love, and if the Quadrilateral could be used with this vital force beneath it, it would accomplish a great work in the reconciliation, recatholization, and the eventual reunification of the Christian church. But, it is to be feared, it is now too late.

When it was first issued, I was senior editor of the *Presbyterian Review*. I accepted it at once and used all my influence to secure its acceptance by the Presbyterian church, at great cost to myself. I have urged it by voice and pen with all my strength. I changed my ecclesiastical position, in order that I might the more effectually testify to it. But after all, I must say that the reason why it has not been more effective is that the bishops have done nothing whatever to make it effective, or even to convince others that they really accepted it themselves. A magnificent opportunity has been thrown away.

Nothing has so much injured the Church of England in the past as her arrogant exclusiveness as a national church. That has brought her into the present crisis of her history, torn by faction and reproached by a multitude of enemies. Her daughter, the Protestant Episcopal church in the United States, has too often exhibited this baneful temper and so repelled multitudes who would otherwise have gladly united with her.

If she permit that evil spirit, which is at the root of all the disasters to British Christianity since the Reformation, again to become dominant, she will forfeit her leadership as the banner-bearer of catholic unity. If she arrogate to herself the name "catholic," which is regarded as the common inheritance of Christianity in some sense by all who use the Apostles' Creed, not one will recognize her right to it but herself, a multitude of her own clergy and people will be ashamed of their church, and

she will become the mock of historical critics, who will not fail to test her by her own history, as well as by the history of the church at large, and by her relative importance in American Christianity.

The greatest movement now going on in the world is the catholic reaction; it is too great a movement to be guided or controlled by any leadership. God's Holy Spirit is breaking the way for the revival, the recatholization and reunion of Christendom, in holy love.

It must be said, however, that most Protestants do not as yet wish to be catholic; they desire simply to be Christians; they would have what they regard as the simple Christianity of Christ and his apostles; they would reform the church after the teachings of the New Testament. A large party would go farther still in an anti-catholic direction, and seek the essence of Christianity underlying the New Testament, and especially the real substance of the teachings of Jesus. It is certainly true that to be catholic is one thing and to be Christian is another thing; the latter is more important than the former. We should not identify them. In these days men will appropriate just so much of Christianity as they can use, and no more. You cannot constrain them by persecution, whether physical, ecclesiastical, or social. You cannot compel them by authority, whether of church or of Bible. And, after all, what is it that the Lord looks at most of all? It is not what we name ourselves, it is not what we profess, it is not what we teach to others; it is what we are and what we do. Far better a minimum of the sacred deposit of Christianity well used than the maximum "laid up in a napkin." (Luke 19:20.) And yet the earnest Christian should not be content with the minimum. Loving, growing Christianity strives for the maximum. Christianity so soon as it began to grow, grew into catholicity. The church was catholic in its early manhood, in its heroic age. A church which is content to be simply Christian remains in its infancy. A Christian who is content with the essence of Christianity remains in his babyhood; as Paul clearly expresses it—"tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men

in craftiness, after the wiles of error" (Eph. 4:14). That is the exact situation, and always has been, and always will be, the situation of those who wish to have only what they think to be the essentials of Christianity. But those who would attain Christian manhood, either as churches or as individuals, must rise to true catholicity, at least in some measure. As Paul continues to say, that they,

speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things unto him, which is the head, even Christ; from whom all the body fitly framed and knit together through that which every joint supplieth, according to the working in due measure of each several part, maketh the increase of the body unto the building up of itself in love. (Eph. 4:15, 16.)